

How God Saved Me and Led Me to a Biblical Church

By: Troy Dannenberger

My name is Troy Dannenberger. I grew up in an ungodly home. I was born out of wedlock; my dad left when my mom was pregnant with me, and I never saw him. I have three sisters, and every one of us have a different dad. I got into drugs and alcohol in my early teens. I had so much hatred in my heart at this time. My thoughts were always on violence and hurting people who had hurt me. At this time I had not acted on my thoughts, but Proverbs 23:7 says, *“As a man thinketh in his heart so is he.”* When I was fifteen I went to Teen Challenge, a “Christian” drug rehab. The Lord used this to slow me down (the way that my thoughts were always on violence, I would have done something bad, or something bad was prone to happen to me, had the Lord not used this). I finished the Teen Challenge program and left and went to a Bible college. This “clean up” did not last long though because I did not have true salvation. Within a few months I was back on the streets of St. Louis, and back into drugs. I had a hard time finding work, so I joined the Navy. While in the Navy I got into hard drugs. I overdosed, got caught with drugs in my possession, and got kicked out. I went back to St. Louis and started using cocaine all the time. I used drugs for more than half my life and was involved in much violence and wickedness. I have been in three car accidents that were very bad and walked out without a scratch. At one point I was involved in some wickedness and got shot at with five bullet holes in my car. I have been delivered from death so many times. The Lord has been so merciful to me. Romans 9:16 says, *“So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.”* Praise the Lord.

I remember one night when I was all messed up on drugs. I cried out to God and said, “God, I don’t want anything to do with you. I have no desire to come to you. I know I need to, but I can’t, this thing has a hold of me, and I can’t get free”. John 6:44 says, *“No man can come to me, except the father which hath sent me draw him...”* I was starting to realize that I was going to Hell, and I knew that I needed to find God, so I began to seek after God at around 42 years of age. I started looking at all the “Christian” channels on cable trying to hear from God, but never hearing anything. I was a man who knew neither the Bible, nor God, but I knew that what I would hear on TV was not of Him. The televangelists would talk more about money than anything. I went to church to hear from Him, but it seemed that I couldn’t find anywhere that didn’t talk about money. I couldn’t hear from Him and did not even know at the time that this is spoken of in Amos 8:11, *“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.”*

By this time I had lost my job on the river where I had been working and making good money. I had quit drinking and using cocaine, but picked up a pain pill addiction to the degree that my tolerance level was so high that I would take amounts that would make most people overdose. I knew that I needed to quit but I couldn’t, nor did I want to. I loved my sin. I had enjoyed these sins for many years, and I knew that I couldn’t quit my sin. I needed God, so I forsook everything that I had and went back to Teen Challenge in Neosho, Missouri to seek God. I didn’t really know whether or not they were of God at the time, but I knew that it was a place where I could seek God and be protected from temptations of the world.

Teen Challenge was different then from the way that it is now. Back then, the students had more free time on their own. Therefore, I stayed in my room a lot, seeking God and reading my

Bible. We had to work for about 4 hours a day and I was given the job of house mouse (cleaning the center) which I performed by myself. It was a blessing from the Lord because I would be alone working and crying out to God. I remember scrubbing the toilets with tears just flowing, crying to the Lord. I started reading God's Word and understanding it. I was hearing Him speak to me through the Word. One of the first things that the Lord spoke to me while I was reading was about Jesus running the money changers out and saying to them, "My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." The Lord spoke to me and told me that my fleshly body was his house. He said, "Troy, my house shall be a house of prayer." So, if we are the Lord's and He is in us, then we will pray. I began to share with others at Teen Challenge the things that the Lord would show me, and they would get angry with me. One staff member there told me to wait, that this was their job, and I said, "What, talking about the bible?" There were many things that happened with me there that I would love to share but will try to stay on major events. I ended up joining the staff there and began to see many things that did not line up with God's Word. As I took a stand for the Lord on these things, I was told by one of the leaders there to keep my mouth shut.

The main thing that opened my eyes was an event that occurred one night. I was in bed asleep, and there was a knock on my door. A student said, "You need to come in our room, if anyone has ever been possessed by a devil, this guy is!" So I went in there, and there was an 18 year old sitting on the floor with his eyes rolled back in his head. He didn't look right. I started praying for him, and he started growling. I prayed, "I come against you by authority in the name of Jesus", and then in the most evil voice that I have ever heard he said, "There is no authority." I freaked out and I didn't know what to do (I had not been born again for very long at this point). So I called the man who manages Teen Challenge and he said to call the ambulance. I was so shocked. I thought, "This is supposed to be a 'man of God' and he can't even get out of bed to come and pray for this soul? He said to call an ambulance..." There were many other things that happened that were quite shocking that night. I later learned that the reason he said to call an ambulance was because they were worried that if something happened to this boy that they could have a lawsuit against them. They were more worried about losing money than a soul on its way to hell. I started to see many things that were not of God, and I knew it was time to get out of there.

About this time I found this church in North Carolina and went to visit it for a week. While I was there that week I thought that it was a wonderful place. They prayed every morning, they had Friday night prayer meetings, and everyone fasted every Wednesday. I went back to Teen Challenge and started praying about going there. One night I woke up out of my sleep, and the Lord spoke to my heart, asking that if He was not there in this place why I was still there. So I left Teen Challenge and went to that church in North Carolina. It was about this time when I heard a sermon where the preacher prayed, "Lord, you said the way to life is narrow, and few there be that are on it. Please bring me into contact with those few." I prayed this prayer many times myself.

As I was at this church in North Carolina, I started to see that it was not of the Lord either. I came to see the way the people were there, believing that the only way they could hear from God was directly through the pastor who they referred to as the "man of God". Around this time I began listening to Keith Daniel. I knew that what I was seeing in this church was wicked, and I had to flee from there. I ended up in Alabama with this family who professed Christ. However, when I got there, I was so shocked at how they let their children dress. I also

saw that they had a TV, and started praying against it that the Lord would convict them of this TV. The next morning I heard the husband tell his wife, “we need to get rid of this TV.” I was so shocked, because I prayed this but never had said anything about it. They did not end up getting rid of it though. This family loved me at first but they shortly began not to when I confronted them about things that were not right.

After leaving there I got on a bus and went back to Neosho, Missouri to stay at a homeless shelter. I was offered a job to help build a house where that tornado had gone through in Joplin, and then was given a job at the homeless shelter as soon as I got there (the other job never came through). By this time, I had listened to many Keith Daniel sermons and really loved them, so I looked on the internet to see who this man was and if he was still alive. It was hard to believe that a man would still be alive who preached like that. I found out that he was alive but became disappointed because he lived in Africa, and I wanted to be able to meet him. I then found out that he had come to America and would be coming to a place only about 30 minutes from me. About 2 months before Keith Daniel would be coming, I asked the lady in charge of the homeless shelter that I worked at for time off. She said that she didn’t know if it would be possible. The time began getting closer to go, and I had hardened my heart against the Lord. I had not prayed or read my Bible in about 2 weeks. Then the lady in charge came to me and asked if I still wanted to go hear Keith Daniel, and I told her that I did, but afterward was wondering why I had told her that because I really didn’t want to go anymore. She started to talk like it was going to be hard there without me so I told her that I could stay there, and that I didn’t need to go. She told me, “no you’re going, you need time off” (because I had worked maybe three or four months without any days off).

I went to the camp, called “Family Camp”, to hear Keith Daniel speak. I checked in and was placed in a dorm that some guys from Arlington, TX were in. I didn’t know who they were and didn’t really see them at first. I went to the first meeting at the camp and met Curtis Jantz and Don Courville’s family (the main person in charge of running the camp) and then went to the morning service which Keith’s son preached at. Afterward, in the afternoon, I went to read my Bible behind the dining area on the deck and a brother from the Church of Arlington, Mike Bailey, came out. He began speaking with me, and I was just amazed at the way that he spoke the scriptures. I got to meet more brethren from Arlington, and I just watched them and was so amazed at the love that they had for one another. As it is written, *“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another”* (Jn. 13:35). I had never seen anything like this in the 47 years of my life. I was speaking with Tanner and Rick Trudeau from Arlington the next day and then Rick had to leave, so it was just Tanner and me there. At this time I had such a fear come upon me of hell, and I told Tanner, “Maybe I am not what I think I am. I need to go to my room and pray.” He said, “Amen,” and I left. He came over later with a plate of food, and we talked more. I started crying out to the Lord for mercy for the sin, and complacency that I had fallen into of late. It was of the Lord for me to be at this camp - not for the reason of hearing Keith Daniel, but rather to meet these Arlington brethren. Tanner and I exchanged phone numbers and talked almost every day after family camp was over. One day, He mentioned to me about visiting them in Texas. I said that maybe around Christmas I would be able to, because I didn’t want to be at the homeless shelter when they celebrated Christmas, and I would be able to go to Texas during that time. That was November 11, 2011.

I opened my Bible and read Proverbs 11:14, which said *“Where no counsel is the people fall, but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.”* I knew that the Lord was warning me that I was going

to fall because I was not around any counsel, but in Arlington there were many counselors that are true Christians and that there was safety. He that does not listen to warnings from the Lord is foolish. That same day I read 2 Cor. 6, that says, *“Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord...”*, and I knew that the Lord was telling me to leave and go to Arlington. Then I started doubting and crying out to the Lord, asking Him, “what if this is another North Carolina? Please Lord, I don’t want another North Carolina”. Then the Lord led me to Jeremiah 3:15, and I read, *“And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.”* This is what the Lord told me before I ever went to the Church of Arlington. I know the Lord is faithful and cannot lie. So I went to Arlington, TX to join the church. I was examined by Brother Jake to see if I had a true biblical salvation. The Lord showed him of a truth that I was of Christ, and I was accepted as a brother in Christ.

In my 47 years I have never seen people who, when you look at them, you truly see Christ in them. The Word says that a good tree cannot bear bad fruit. I have not seen bad fruit in this church, only people who love the Lord and exhort one another daily to flee from sin, hate sin, and love the Lord. I have been with the church for about 9 months now and I love my brothers and sisters in Christ here more and more as time goes on. I myself am blessed to hear when we are spoken evil of, as we often are, because I know that it is not because of us, but because of Christ in us. They did the same to Christ. He was evil spoken of in his day, even as He says in the scriptures, *“Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you”* (Matt. 5:11; Lk. 6:22; Jn. 7:7; 15:18). Amen.